

(Washington DC) This afternoon, for the second time in two weeks, Republicans blocked the House of Representatives from debating and voting on an increase in the minimum wage. Democratic Representatives David Obey, Steny Hoyer and Alan Mollohan attempted to raise the minimum wage from the current level of \$5.15 per hour to \$7.25 per hour over a two year period. However, Republicans remain committed to blocking any increase even though it was last raised in 1997 and used a procedural maneuver to prevent floor consideration.

Congressman Charlie Gonzalez issued the following statement:

"Too many parents are forced to work a second job just so they can make sure their children have adequate clothing and food. Raising the minimum wage would put more money into the pockets of American families so it would not be such a struggle to provide the essentials.

Over the last nine years, the purchasing power of families dependent on the minimum wage has eroded as prices have slowly edged upward. The price of gasoline, for example, has effectively tripled since 1990's and, of course, families have to fill their cars. So, this one necessity alone has eaten up a larger share of the minimum wage worker's stagnant wages.

It is time that the Republican controlled Congress helps all Americans especially those working hard to get by on the current minimum wage."

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